

New Resident and Visitors' Guide

13th District of Florida

Beaches

Siesta Beach is located on Beach Road on Siesta Key. Siesta Beach is known as one of the most beautiful beaches anywhere in the world. At the "Great International White Sand Beach

Challenge" held in 1987, it was recognized as having the "whitest and finest sand in the world."

Unlike beaches elsewhere that are made up mostly of coral, Siesta Beach's sand is 99% quartz. Even on the hottest days, the sand is so



reflective that it feels cool underfoot. It's estimated that the sand on Siesta Beach is millions of years old, and started in the Appalachians and flowed down the rivers and was eventually deposited on the shores of Siesta Key. Shallow water depth in the near shore area together with year round lifeguard protection, makes this one of the safest beaches in the County and great for small children.

Some of the Many Great Places to Visit in the Sarasota Area

Circus Sarasota - Sarasota's own resident circus. Circus Sarasota presents exciting professional family entertainment in winter performances under the big-top and special events and classes throughout the year.

Crowley Museum and Nature Center - The self-guided nature trail winds through the property from dry pine flatwoods, shady oak hammocks, over the Maple Branch swamp, and out to the edge of Tatum Sawgrass Marsh along the Myakka River. The wide trails offer easy and pleasant walking conditions that are enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities. The Museum exhibits a variety of historic objects, household furnishings and tools.

Florida Gulf Coast Rail Road Museum - The Museum offers one of the most unique museum experiences in the world. Here you "Ride the Exhibits!". The Museum operates weekend excursions

year-round from the Train Station in Parrish, Florida.

G.WIZ (Gulfcoast Wonder and Imagination Zone) - G.WIZ provides a unique hands on view of science with an array of exhibits that are sure to entertain everyone in the family. This is the most fun you have ever had discovering science.

Historic Spanish Point - Historic Spanish Point is a 30-acre historical, archaeological and environmental museum. Here you can walk through the history of the area from the region's earliest people and their shell mounds to the inhabitants of the early 1900s.

John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art - The Museum of Art, built by John Ringling to house his personal collection of masterpieces, today features paintings and sculptures by the great Old Masters including Rubens, van Dyck, Velázquez, Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese, El Greco, Gainsborough and more. In addition you can tour the Cà d'Zan Mansion, the Ringlings' dazzling palatial mansion with its 56 furnished rooms, a tribute to the American Dream which reflects the splendor and romance of Italy. Also housed on the grounds is the famous Circus Museum celebrating the American circus and its history.

Marie Selby Botanical Gardens - The 9.5-acre bayfront Selby Gardens property is an open-air and under-glass museum of more than 20,000 colorful plants. The gardens specialize in tropical plants, especially epiphytes (plants that grow on other plants). Selby Gardens is perhaps best known for its living collection of more than 6,000 orchids.

Mote Marine Laboratory - At Mote Aquarium, you can explore the secrets of the sea through touch pools, viewable-working labs and high-tech interactive exhibits that showcase the world-renowned research of Mote Marine Laboratory. See sharks, dolphins, manatees and sea turtles, along with more than 100 other species of marine life.

Myakka River State Park - One of the largest parks in Florida, Myakka features some of the most diverse natural areas. The Myakka River flows through 58 square miles of wetlands, prairies, hammocks, and pinelands. Enjoy the wildlife from a boardwalk that stretches out over the Upper Myakka Lake or take a walk along the canopy walkway. You can also enjoy boating on the park's river and two lakes, hike along trails that cross dry prairie, or take a lake tour on the world's two largest airboats. Full-facility campgrounds and primitive campsites are available.

Sarasota Classic Car Museum - The Sarasota Classic Car Museum is recognized as one of the Nation's oldest continuously operating antique car museums. The museum has rotating exhibits throughout the year featuring antique, exotic, European and one-of-a-kind car classics.

Sarasota Jungle Gardens - Sarasota Jungle Gardens features 10 acres of tropical vegetation, winding trails and entertaining, educational bird and reptile shows. Also featured are the American Flamingos that will eat out of the palm of your hand.

Siesta Key Public Beach - One of the world's best beaches for its power white sand that is soft and cool on the feet as well as its breath-taking sunsets, easy-going waves. Best of all, it's free. This is an

absolute must see if you come to Sarasota.

South Florida Museum, Parker Manatee Aquarium and Bishop Planetarium - Three great attractions in one stop. The South Florida Museum shows the region from the prehistoric to the present with life-size dioramas and exhibits based on its extensive collections of anthropological artifacts. The Manatee Aquarium is a second stage rehabilitation facility for manatees that will be released back into the wild. It is also the permanent home to Manatee County's most famous resident and official mascot, 'Snooty', the manatee. Bishop Planetarium is a domed theater, boasting one of the most advanced all-digital projection systems in the world. The planetarium is a remarkable astronomy education resource, allowing visitors to explore their universe through traditional live star talks and virtual journeys to the far reaches of the cosmos.

Van Wezel - Set along Sarasota's beautiful bay front, the landmark Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall has been entertaining audiences with a variety of music, dance, theater and comedy for more than 35 years. <http://www.vanwezel.org/aboutUs/aboutTheHall.cfmSet> BOX OFFICE: 1-800-826-9303

Hospitals

Bon Secours Hospital

540 The Rialto ♦ Venice, FL ♦ 941.485.7711

Sarasota Memorial Hospital

1700 Tamiami Trail ♦ Sarasota, FL ♦ 941.917.9000

Doctors Hospital of Sarasota

5731 Bee Ridge Road ♦ Sarasota, FL ♦ 941.342.1100